

**Giants of Science
Series: Alexander
Graham Bell**

by Michael Pollard, 64 pp.,
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*Alexander Graham Bell: Father
of Modern Communication*
describes the personal and
professional life of Bell.

From a young teacher of the
deaf to his development of the
telephone, the author portrays
Bell as inquisitive and always
engaged in some intellectual
pursuit. The text describes his
early successes as an inventor
and teacher as well his
frustrations later in life when he
failed to duplicate his success.

Although Bell produced a
number of other worthwhile
inventions, none connected
with the general public quite
like the telephone did.

This narrative of Bell's life

has been somewhat
simplified to emphasize the
story of his most significant
invention. The telephone is so
familiar that it is a great
subject for students to
explore.

It is a challenge for an
author to provide a complete
picture of the subject's life
within 60 pages, so some
intriguing parts of Bell's life,
such as his relationship with
his father and father-in-law/
financial backer are not
addressed in substantial
detail. Some readers may
want to investigate further.

The language is simple
and direct, and the narrative
helps the reader to see that
inventions typically do not
take place in isolation.
Economic issues, competition
among inventors, and the
urge to be "first" all motivate
inventors. Connecting the
personal with the professional
helps to create a more
accurate picture of the
process of invention.

Biographies can be useful
for looking at science in a
broader context by examining
how scientific principles can
be applied to technological
problems and challenges, and
how those technologies have
influenced our lives.

A reading such as this
would fit well into a science-
technology-society
instructional framework in
middle or secondary school.

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